

## Message Text

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46

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SUBJECT: THE "THIRD FORCE" AND THE PARIS AGREEMENT

REF: SAIGON 15265

1. DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE PARIS AGREEMENT SAYS NOTHING OF THE SO-CALLED "THIRD FORCE" THE CHARGE IS BEING INCREASINGLY AIRED THAT THE GVN HAS REFUSED TO IMPLEMENT THE TERMS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT RELATING TO IT. THE MOST RECENT ILL INFORMED CRITICISM ON THIS POINT APPEARS GEARED TO THE JANUARY 25 OPENING OF THE WASHINGTON "ASSEMBLY TO SAVE THE PEACE AGREEMENT" IN WHICH OPPONENTS OF OUR SOUTHEAST ASIA POLICY SAY THEY WILL MAKE A MAJOR PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT TO PERSUADE THE PUBLIC AND THE CONGRESS THAT THE US SHOULD END ITS ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH VIETNAM.

2. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 16, SENATOR MCGOVERN SAID, "FOR EXAMPLE, ARTICLE 12 OF THE AGREEMENT CONTEMPLATES A THIRD NEUTRAL FORCE IN VIETNAM..." BUT THE FACT IS THAT THE PARIS AGREEMENT MAKES NO REFERENCE AT ALL TO A "THIRD FORCE", NEUTRAL OR OTHERWISE, IN ARTICLE 12 OR IN ANY OTHER ARTICLE.

3. ARTICLE 12 STATES THAT "IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE THE TWO (RPT TWO) SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES SHALL HOLD  
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CONSULTATIONS IN A SPIRIT OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND

CONCORD, MUTUAL RESPECT, AND MUTUAL NON-ELIMINATION TO SET UP A NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD OF THREE EQUAL SEGMENTS." THIS IS ALL THAT IS SAID IN THE AGREEMENT AS TO HOW THE NCNRC IS TO BE FORMED. FROM THIS IT IS CLEAR THAT THE COMPOSITION OF THE NCNRC, AND THE DEFINITION OF, AND PROCEDURE FOR CHOOSING, THE "THREE EQUAL SEGMENTS", IS LEFT TO FUTURE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES. WHILE NORTH VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA HAS LONG BEEN CLAIMING THAT THE PARIS AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR ANEUTRAL "THIRD FORCE" IN SOUTH VIETNAM, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SUPPORT FOR THIS CLAIM IN ANY ARTICLE OF THE AGREEMENT.

4. SENATOR MCGOVERN ALSO STATES THAT ARTICLE 12 OF THE AGREEMENT "CONTEMPLATES" THAT THE "THIRD NEUTRAL FORCE" WOULD HAVE "AUTHORITY EQUAL TO THAT OF THE PRG AND THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT (REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM) IN ARRANGING A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT AND FREE ELECTIONS." THERE IS NO BASIS WHATEVER FOR THIS STATEMENT IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT, WHICH NOWHERE SPEAKS OF THE "AUTHORITY" TO BE VESTED IN ANY OF THE "THREE SEGMENTS" OF THE NCNRC. THE ONLY PROVISION IN THE AGREEMENT REGARDING THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE NCNRC IS THE SENTENCE IN ARTICLE 12 WHICH READS: "THE COUNCIL (I.E., THE NCNRC) SHALL OPERATE ON THE PRINCIPLE OF UNANIMITY." THUS ARTICLE 12 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT CLEARLY CONTEMPLATES THAT THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES, THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE "PRG" WILL CONSULT AND AGREE ON QUESTIONS REGARDING COMPOSITION AND FUNCTION OF THE "THREE EQUAL SEGMENTS." FURTHERMORE, UNDER THE AGREEMENT "ARRANGING A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT" IS NOT RPT NOT A FUNCTION OF THE NCNRC. ARTICLE 12 PROVIDES: "THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES SHALL SIGN AN AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNAL MATTERS OF SOUTH VIETNAM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND DO THEIR UTMOST TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WITHIN NINETY DAYS AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE COMES INTO EFFECT, IN KEEPING WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS FOR PEACE, INDEPENDENCE AND DEMOCRACY."

5. NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE "PRG" LOOKING TOWARD FORMATION OF THE NCNRC AND THE HOLDING OF GENERAL ELECTIONS BEGAN SHORTLY AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT TWO YEARS AGO. DURING THESE TALKS, HELD AT LA CELLE ST. CLOUD NEAR PARIS, THE GVN ADVANCED COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS  
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FOR THE EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NCNRC AND THE HOLDING OF A GENERAL ELECTION AT AN EARLY DATE. THROUGHOUT THESE NEGOTIATIONS THE "PRG" REFUSED TO SET A DATE FOR THE ELECTIONS AND IN MAY 1974 UNILATERALLY BROKE OFF THE TALKS, THUS INDEFINITELY POSTPONING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NCNRC. "PRG" STALLING THE ELECTIONS CAME AS NO SURPRISE AS IT HAS BEEN EVIDENT SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT THAT THE "PRG" WOULD BE UNABLE TO POLL MORE THAN A TINY MINORITY IN ANY FAIR, INTERNATIONALLY SUPERVISED

ELECTION IN SOUTH VIETNAM (THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES THAT THE GENERAL ELECTION WOULD BE SUPERVISED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION).

6. SINCE MAY, THE "PRG" HAS REPEATEDLY REJECTED GVN APPEALS TO RETURN TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. INSTEAD IT HAS DECLARED THAT IT WOULD NEVER NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT WHICH SIGNED THE PARIS AGREEMENT, THAT OF PRESIDENT THIEU. DESPITE THIS, PRESIDENT THIEU HAS AGAIN EXPRESSED THE DESIRE OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO GET ON WITH FORMATION OF THE NCNRC AND THE HOLDING OF A GENERAL ELECTION. ON NOVEMBER 21, 1974, PRESIDENT THIEU IN A PUBLIC ADDRESS DECLARED THAT THE "REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM IS WILLING TO DISCUSS AND IMPLEMENT WITHOUT DELAY THE POLITICAL SOLUTION ANTICIPATED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT, WHICH INCLUDES THE SETTING UP OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD IN ORDER TO PROGRESS TOWARDS GENUINELY FREE AND DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION."

7. THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT THE GVN DOES NOT SUPPORT THE PARIS AGREEMENT IN RESPECT OF THE NCNRC AND THE SO-CALLED "THIRD FORCE" ARE MANIFESTLY IGNORANT OF THE FOREGOING FACTS. WE SUGGEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REITERATE THESE FACTS PUBLICLY SO THAT THE TRUTH REGARDING THE GVN'S EFFORTS, IN THE FACT OF TWO YEARS OF "PRG" INTRANSIGENCE, TO REALIZE THE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM ENVISAGED IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT WILL BE MADE FULLY KNOWN TO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC.  
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